

Analysis of Postcolonial Themes in Narendra Jadhav 's Outcaste: A Memoir

Manoj Pralhad Bhagat

(Assistant Professor in English) Sundarrao More Arts, Commerce and Science College, Poladpur -Raigad Maharashtra, India
Email: manojpralhadbhagat@gmail.com

Submitted: 05-sep-2025 Revised: 10-Sep-2025 Accepted: 10-Oct-2025 Published: 31-Oct-2025

Manuscript ID:
IJEWLPSIR-2025-020505



Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0):

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work no commercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.17446098
DOI Link:
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17446098>

Volume: 2
Issue: 5
Month: Oct 2025
E-ISSN: 3065-7873

Manoj Pralhad Bhagat
(Assistant Professor in English)
Sundarrao More Arts, Commerce and Science College, Poladpur -Raigad Maharashtra, India

Email: manojpralhadbhagat@gmail.com

Bhagat, M. P. (2025). Analysis of Postcolonial Themes in Narendra Jadhav 's Outcaste: A Memoir. International Journal of English and World Languages & Literature Paradigm Shift in International Research, 2(5), 14-16.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17446098>

Address for correspondence:
Manoj Pralhad Bhagat
(Assistant Professor in English)
Sundarrao More Arts, Commerce and Science College, Poladpur -Raigad Maharashtra, India
Email: manojpralhadbhagat@gmail.com

Abstract

Dr. Narendra Jadhav is considered as one of the renowned writers in English. He is a prolific writer who wrote in many languages including English, Hindi and Marathi. His Magnum Opus work Aamcha Baap ani Aamhi has been translated and adapted into many national and international languages. Outcaste: A Memoir was published in 2003 by Viking Publication. It is a loving tribute from a son to his father in the form of a book. The first edition of the book sold out on the day of publication is proof of its popularity. It has been translated into French, Korean other than English. The autobiographical work revolves around the saga of Jadhav family. The continuous struggle out of the rigid caste system and the ultimate success forms the core of the book. The purpose of the present research paper is to analyse the Postcolonial themes in Narendra Jadhav 's Outcaste A Memoir.

Keywords: - Resistance, identity, self-respect, caste discrimination

Introduction: -

Dr. Narendra Jadhav's Outcaste: A Memoir deals with the rigid caste system in India. The age-old traditional system which doesn't allow its members to change their class in any form. There are stringent limitations on the freedom of Dalit community in all spheres of life. There was no chance of any formal education to the depressed classes in India. They were prohibited from raising any property. Narendra Jadhav's father Damodar Jadhav belongs to the downtrodden community from Ozar in Nashik district of Maharashtra. He is considered as the true protagonist of the Memoir. His mother Rahiaaji plays a crucial role in the life and struggle of the Jadhav family. Narendra Jadhav and his siblings used to call her as Aai. It was a turn of Damodar Jadhav to follow the yeskar duty in his ancestral village. As a staunch follower of Dr Ambedkar, he refused to follow the yeskar duty. The Fauzdar ordered him to lift the body of the deceased woman from the well but he refused to do so at once. As a result Fauzdar had beaten him mercilessly. Damodar Jadhav ultimately left Ozar and took refuge in Wadala, suburbs of Mumbai. He worked as manual labour in Mumbai. But got admitted his kids in various reputed schools. Dr. Narendra Jadhav found a job in The Reserve Bank of India. His siblings also got prestigious jobs. Dr. Narendra Jadhav and his family changed the lot of their family and became triumphant.

Analysis: -

1)Break from Tradition

Narendra Jadhav's Outcaste A Memoir deals with the triumphant journey of the Jadhav family out of the rigid caste system in India. Narendra Jadhav as writer broke the traditional norms of literary conventions. It was impossible to find the downtrodden community as the main subject of the mainstream narrative. It is a revolutionary act on the part of Dalit community. Outcaste: A Memoir established Narendra Jadhav as a successful writer. The plight and struggle of the Jadhav family in particular and dalit community in general find a place in literature.

2)Resistance: - Dr. NarendraJadhav's Outcaste A Memoir characterized with the act of resistance. Damodar Jadhav, father of Narendra Jadhav opposed the tyranny of Fauzdar. The Fauzdar approached him, twirling his whip. 'Are you talking back to me? Did you not hear what he said? Don't waste my time, get the body out.' (pp.07) Damu didn't follow the order of the Fauzdar and screamed 'Whoever wants to claim the body, will come and worry about getting the body out. No matter what, I am not going to do it.'(pp.08)

He even refused to follow the yeskar tradition of his family. According to him it is an unjust and inhuman tradition.

3) Migration towards city:-

Damodar Jadhav became the staunch follower of Dr Ambedkar. In Mumbai he used to attend the meetings and program of the Ambedkarite movement.

3) Migration towards city: -

Damodar Jadhav became the staunch follower of Dr Ambedkar. In Mumbai he used to attend the meetings and program of the Ambedkarite movement. The words and thoughts of Dr Ambedkar have a deepening impact on his psyche. After the strong refusal to the Fauzdar and subsequent denial to the yeskar duty. He decided to leave Ozar and tried to find relief in the suburbs of Mumbai. In this way he followed Dr Ambedkar's message to leave villages and settle in cities. Dr Ambedkar considers the village as a haven of exploitation and discrimination. The dalit couldn't get respectable job and treatment in the rigid caste system of Villages.

4) Emphasize on Education:-

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar appeals to his followers to educate, organize and agitate. Damodar Jadhav admitted his kids to reputed schools. Dr Narendra Jadhav completed his education from Ramnarayan Ruia College. He also completed his post graduation from University of Mumbai. Narendra jadhav worked as a chief economist in the Reserve Bank of India, Mumbai. He also completed his PhD from Indiana University, USA. His daughter Apoorva considers herself as a global citizen. According to Narendra Jadhav the life and works of Dr Ambedkar shaped the future of Dalit community.

5) Social Justice:-

The real protagonist of the Outcaste : A Memoir is Damodar Jadhav, father of Narendra Jadhav. He had given concrete form to the ideology of Dr Ambedkar. He participated in the various movement started by Dr Ambedkar. He alongwith his wife Sonu actively involved in the Kalaram temple movement. Damodar Jadhav had to wait a very long time to get job in GIP Railway. He says, ' The next day I had to be examined by a doctor. And on 1 November 1924, I became a regular worker of the GIP Railway.' (pp113)

6) Conversion:-

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar decided to adopt Buddhism. He announced at Yeola that he will adopt Buddhism. 14th October 1956 had been declared the day of mass conversion at Nagpur. Damodar Jadhav had been one of the active volunteers. People from across the country participated in the program. The volunteers managed the event with enthusiasm and determination. It was an act of resistance to the inhuman treatment. Dr. Ambedkar, in his long and meaningful speech talked about the three major principles of Buddha's i.e. liberty, equality and fraternity. According to him compassion is required for the liberation of masses from the pitiable condition. From the day of conversion Damodar Jadhav followed the major tenets of Buddhism.

7) Social Mobility:-

Even though born and brought up in the Ozar, Damodar Jadhav had changed the social and economical condition of his family. His four sons find the best jobs in various fields. Earlier he had to depend on the yeskar duty to maintain his family. Now they are economically free and independent. The social atmosphere of the Mumbai had been different from Ozar. There was a chance of upward mobility. The Ambedkarite movement filled Damodar Jadhav with energy, enthusiasm and confidence. The slogan of Dr. Ambedkar to educate, organize and agitate changed the lives of millions of Dalit in India. Narendra Jadhav 's successful career as a chief economist in the Reserve Bank of India help millions to follow his footsteps. He was not only a bestseller author but also a successful political figure. During the reign of Dr. Manmohan Singh he was appointed as a member of National Advisory council. He was also appointed as a member of the planning commission. Narendra Jadhav shaped the various bills including Right to Education Act, worked on SC,ST subplan.

8) Revolt against literary and social norms:-

Outcaste:A Memoir contributed a lot in the development of Indian writings in English. It was also published in America by Simon and Schuster. Narendra Jadhav received the most prestigious award for his literary creation. It is published in most of the Indian languages including Punjabi. It was awarded the Sahitya Academy award for the Punjabi version. A finest literary piece in Dalit literature. It works against the traditional norms of literary writings. The life and struggle of Jadhav family has never been glorified in the mainstream narrative.

9) Intersections in Outcaste : A Memoir :-

The female characters in Narendra Jadhav's autobiography are typical and live. They are twice marginalised, first as a member of depressed class and secondly as a woman. The major female characters includes Narendra Jadhav's grand mother Rahiaai, his mother Sonubai and his daughter Apoorva. The generation gap between Narendra Jadhav; mother ,mother and daughter Apoorva is quite discernible. On the other hand Apoorva considered herself as a global citizen where as Rahiaai and Sonubai are typical traditional womens.

Conclusion: -

Narendra Jadhav 's Outcaste A Memoir is a finest piece of literary writings. It represents the life and struggle of the Jadhav family out of the rigid caste system in India. It is representative of millions of people from disadvantaged groups. The sorrows, sufferings, hardships, humiliation, exploitation and inhuman treatment characterized the life of dalits. Outcaste: A Memoir is a ray of hope for the millions in India. The ultimate success of Jadhav family is more than a personal achievement. It will continue to inspire coming generations.

Acknowledgment

The author expresses sincere gratitude to Sundarao More Arts, Commerce and Science College, Poladpur – Raigad, for providing an encouraging academic environment and continuous support in research and writing. Heartfelt thanks are extended to the Department of English for valuable suggestions, cooperation, and access to scholarly resources. The author also acknowledges the profound inspiration drawn from the life and works of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Dr. Narendra Jadhav, whose contributions to social justice, equality, and education form the foundation of this study.

Finally, the author wishes to thank colleagues, friends, and family members for their constant motivation and moral support throughout the completion of this research paper.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References:

1. Primary Sources:-
2. Jadhav, Narendra , Outcaste A Memoir , Penguin India 2003
3. Jadhav, Narendra, Untouchables , Scribner Publication ,2005
4. Jadhav, Narendra, Aamcha Baap Ani Aamhi, Granthali publication Mumbai
5. Secondary sources:-
6. Ambedkar B. R. Cates in India, New Delhi : Critical Quest 1913 Print.
7. Ambedkar B. R. What Congress and Gandhi have done for Untouchables . Thakur and Company, 1945
8. Ambedkar B. R. Who were the Shudras ? Pune Rajesh Prakashan
9. Ambedkar B. R. Who were the Untouchables? Pune Rajesh Prakashan
10. Ambedkar B. R. Annihilation of Castes, New Delhi : Critical Quest 1936 Print.
11. Ashcroft, Bill,et. al (edition 1995) The Post- Colonial Studie Reader, London Routledge
12. Aston, N. M. Ed Literature of Marginality:Dalit Literature and African American Literature, New Delhi, Prestige Book
13. Barry, Peter. Beginning Theory: An Introduction Literary and Cultural Theory. Manchester:UP,1995.
14. Bhabha, Homi K.(1994). The Location of Culture. London: Routledge.
15. Meshram,Yogendra. Dalit Literature: It's Origin and Development. Nagpur. Shri Mangesh Prakashan.2011
16. Omvedt, Gail. Ambedkar Towards an Enlightened India. Penguin Books India,2004
17. Web Sources
18. <https://www.wikipedia.org>
19. <https://nlist.inflibnet.ac.in>